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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 10 titles deal with the following topics: (1) press bias in Northern Ireland; (2) the nature of news media selection; (3) the agenda-setting function of the press; (4) a training program for newsroom supervisors using video taped role models; (5) the relationship between law enforcement officers and newspaper reporters on crime news; (6) a history of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association; (7) Cherokee Indian editor, Elias Boudinot; (8) the effect of advertising on consumer press credibility; (9) the news-writing processes of 3 practicing journalists; and (10) the perceived value of college training by professional journalists in 3 metropolitan areas. (HTH)

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Journalism and Journalism Education :

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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

Corbett, James Richard
PRESS BIAS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Crimmins, James Charles
THE NATURE OF NEWS READING

DeGeorge, William Francis
AN EXPERIMENTAL TEST OF THE AGENDA-SETTING FUNCTION

Deppa, Joan Alice
CHANGE IN THE NEWSROOM: FIELD TEST OF A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR NEWSROOM SUPERVISORS USING VIDEO-TAPED ROLE MODELS

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A CO-ORIENTATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND NEWSPAPER REPORTERS ON CRIME NEWS

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A HISTORY OF THE COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION, 1924-1981

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Wulfmeyer, Kenneth Tim
PERCEIVED VALUE OF COLLEGE TRAINING BY PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS IN THREE METROPOLITAN AREAS

PRESS BIAS IN NORTHERN IRELAND Order No. 8128979

CORBETT, JAMES RICHARD, PH.D. *The Ohio State University*, 1981. 162pp. Adviser: Professor Thomas A. McCain

This study was designed to show a relationship between the stages of the agitation process in Northern Ireland and bias in three Northern Irish newspapers. The agitation process is defined by using Bowers and Ochs' definition of Agitation Process in which agitants chose from among various "strategies" and "tactics". "Strategies" are the more general choices, "tactics" are specific actions.

Bias in this study was operationalized as presence of a statistically significant number of evaluative terms. Evaluative terms were defined using a method developed by David Pratt for finding bias in textbooks. An evaluative term was defined as a word that could be used to describe saints or sinners, but not both saints and sinners.

Analysis of Variance and Chi Square tests revealed that there was little relationship between bias as operationalized and the stages of the agitation process. The lack of significance was somewhat confounding. However, a post-hoc rereading of Bowers and Ochs provided one possible explanation. The lack of terms could be interpreted as evidence of establishment "avoidance." "Avoidance" is one of four "strategies" available to the establishment when confronted by agitants. Within the general strategy of "avoidance", "denial of means" is an effective tactic. Here, the lack of stories, the lack of evaluation, as well as legal and extra legal sanctions taken against the agitants could all be evidence of "avoidance."

The above explanation does conform to Bowers and Ochs paradigm, however, there are other possible explanations. For instance, journalistic style in Northern Ireland, may dictate a lack of terms and stories, or there may be more evaluative data in the Northern Irish newspapers than is apparent to an American researcher.

THE NATURE OF NEWS READING

CRIMMINS, JAMES CHARLES, PH.D. *The University of Chicago*, 1981.

Each person in a modern society has available to him an enormous amount of mass media news. Through a little understood process, a person selects the media which will serve as his sources for news and specific news information that he will attend to.

The research reported in this paper was designed to add to our understanding of news selection through an examination of newspaper reading.

Like several earlier research efforts, this research attempts to identify the rewards and penalties associated with newspaper reading. However, this research goes beyond identification and addresses several questions ignored in earlier research. (1) Do the rewards and penalties associated with newspaper reading vary by demographic group? (2) Do the rewards and penalties occur as often as people expect them to? Are readers' expectations realistic? (3) What is the range of newspaper content that can lead to each reward or penalty? (4) Is the association of rewards and penalties with newspaper reading related to the frequency of newspaper reading?

AN EXPERIMENTAL TEST OF THE AGENDA-SETTING FUNCTION Order No. DA8206974

DEGEORGE, WILLIAM FRANCIS, PH.D. *Syracuse University*, 1981. 144pp.

The agenda-setting function of the press hypothesizes that the media have the ability to influence the salience of events in the public mind. In the seven years since empirical evidence of such effects were published (by McCombs and Shaw, 1972), a large number of studies have been conducted. Most of these have concerned the mass media/public audience interface even though agenda-setting is applicable to an almost unlimited communication environment, whatever the interface. This study replicates these previous studies; however, the operationalization is outside the usual domain and is in the form of an experimental design.

Five hypotheses were formulated and investigated. Two of these assert that exposure to a topic is positively related to the perceived salience of that topic; two assert that interpersonal communication about a topic is positively related to the perceived salience of that topic; and the other asserts a positive relationship between exposure to a topic and the amount of interpersonal communication about that topic, thus closing the loop of this three-variable model.

Six contingent conditions were tested, including interest in a topic, interest in the generic problem itself, how well members of a group work together as a team, the amount of influence concerning a topic which is obtained from a source outside the usual media content, the abililty or desire of individuals to absorb such material, and gender.

Partial support for the first hypothesis was found where increased exposure leads to increased salience relative to the intrapersonal agenda (what one thinks is important), however the trend is not monotonic. Low exposure resulted in the highest salience with additional exposure having a negative effect.

The major pattern which emerged with the second hypothesis was, in general, an inverse relationship. That is, an increase in exposure led to a decrease in perceived salience concerning what others may consider to be the more important problem or topic (extrapersonal agenda).

The findings for the third and fourth hypotheses were nonsignificant, possibly due to a problem of information overload. The time frame, within which this experiment was conducted, necessitated a schedule wherein a large amount of material was forced upon the subjects who may have had conflicting priorities with respect to their other day to day activities.

Finally, the data totally supported the relationship theorized by hypothesis 5 that an increase in the amount of exposure to a topic leads to a corresponding increase in the amount of discussion about that topic.

From the findings in this study, the following relationship appears to exist: (1) Intrapersonal Agenda: an increase in exposure has a positive relationship with the salience of a topic; the amount of exposure to a topic has a positive relationship with the amount of discussion about that topic. (2) Extrapersonal Agenda: an increase in exposure has a negative relationship with the salience of a topic; the amount of exposure to a topic has a positive relationship with the amount of discussion about that topic.

CHANGE IN THE NEWSROOM: FIELD TEST OF A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR NEWSROOM SUPERVISORS USING VIDEO-TAPED ROLE MODELS Order No. 8202418

DEPPA, JOAN ALICE, PH.D. *Michigan State University*, 1981. 514pp.

The study involves development of a training program using video-taped role models to help newsroom supervisors develop interpersonal skills and a field test of the program at a medium-sized newspaper. The program concentrates on skills to increase staff effectiveness in gathering and processing news. It stresses the need to encourage staff input, provide feedback about performance and maintain and enhance self-esteem. Five video-taped segments cover introduction of a new staffer to the job, making an assignment, praising good work, motivating the poor performer and dealing with criticism.

The field test uses items from the Michigan Organizational Assessment package and the Job Descriptive Index, as well as questions from a sociological study of journalists, for a pre- and post-test of staff attitudes as dependent variables. Key independent variables are measures of perceived change, especially changes reported by individual supervisors with regard to their communication with individual staffers. Results at the newspaper where the training program took place are compared with those of another newspaper, originally designated as a control unit, but which underwent a management reorganization in the ten weeks between pre- and post-tests. Findings at the newspaper where the training program was conducted show significant links between supervisory communication and satisfaction with supervision, with the newspaper's performance and with career choice, as well as the visible impact staffers believe their work has on the paper, how clearly they understand what they are to do and the quantity of work they report doing. The role of intrinsic, personal growth, promotion and monetary rewards is also investigated. Changes made in keeping with the training program are tied to significant increases in organizational

involvement and in satisfaction with the choice of news work as a career, while a policy announcement of a bonus plan is linked to significant increases in expectations of monetary rewards for performing especially well.

Findings indicate the program can help supervisors change in ways that have a positive relationship to staff attitudes, while reorganizing the management team also can affect staff attitudes.

A CO-ORIENTATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND NEWSPAPER REPORTERS ON CRIME NEWS Order No. DA8206454

ERVIN, ROBERT FERRELL, PH.D. *Southern Illinois University at Carbondale*, 1981. 219pp. Major Professor: Dr. L. Erwin Atwood

The population looks to the mass media for information about those areas of social life that the citizen seldom, if ever, comes in direct contact with. One of the most consistent areas of that "news hunger" has been in the areas of crime and enforcement laws.

Information directed toward the public about police activity historically has stemmed primarily from the newspaper.

Each newspaper may have its individual preference in writing style, but the reporter writes in a manner that can "be trusted" for it relies upon what the reader, you or others he trusts, like an official source, saw and heard. This would suggest that the reporter continuously talks to law enforcement people and strives to establish a good working relationship between the reporter and the law enforcement officer, although a vast amount of evidence found in the trade literature points to a "lack of rapport" and "natural antagonism."

This study sought to investigate the perceptions of reporters and law enforcement officers concerning crime news reporting and to apply a co-orientation framework to the study of these perceptions in an attempt to explore apparent reification of crime news.

The sample consisted of 26 law enforcement officers and reporters who were asked to sort a deck of 54-statements about reporting of crime news into eleven ranked piles according to a modified normal distribution. The sorting was done on the basis of the agree-disagree criterion. After respondents had rank ordered the statements in terms of their agreement, they were asked to again rank order the sample group of statements "as if" they were in the opposite professional role.

The factor analysis used to test the relationship produced a two-factor solution, however, factors were not clearly identified with either of the two professional roles. Only one of the correlations used to test the relationships of the co-orientation model (agreement (1), congruency (2) and accuracy (2)) was significant at the .05 level: the correlations between police officer cognitions of crime news and the police officer perception of reporter cognitions of crime news, a test of congruency.

The analysis of police cognitions produced a two-factor solution with Type I suggesting that any conflicting interests between reporter and officer mut be set aside. Type II were generally negative toward reporters and their news stories.

The analysis of reporter cognitions produced a two-factor solution, Type I suggested the elimination of prejudices in dealing with police. Type II feared police lied and thus distorted the truthfulness of crime stories.

The analysis of law enforcement perceptions of reporter cognitions produced a one-factor solution in which police believed reporters would claim their stories have accurate descriptions of the police.

Reporter perceptions of law enforcement cognitions produced a three-factor solution. Type I believed that newspapers present a true description. Type II suggested that officers would see newspaper coverage as "fair." Type III perceived officers as believing it was appropriate for police to take evasive actions in dealing with reporters.

When a specially matched group of reporters and officers were analyzed, two types appeared: Type I, generally older, felt the reporter could be trusted to do a good job because he has proven himself. Type II suggested the reporters could make greater efforts to show that they work hard, but that police should cooperate more fully.

The police and reporters perception produced a two-factor solution. Type I supported a "check and balance system" in the relationship. Type II, all young reporters, found current crime coverage lacking and said that police do not cooperate because of the reporter's supposed bias. They saw no reason for the situation to improve and said reporters should divorce themselves from the concept of "objectivity."

A HISTORY OF THE COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION, 1924-1981 Order No. 8202600

HINES, BARBARA ANNE BEALOR, PH.D. *University of Maryland*, 1981. 345pp. Supervisor: Dr. John C. Carr

Since 1924, the Columbia Scholastic Press Association based at Columbia University, New York, has been serving school publications staffs through its annual convention, conference, critiques, and magazine, *The School Press Review*. More than 182,000 students have attended the annual convention programs and more than 35,000 have attended the conferences which draw students from all regions of the United States.

This investigation undertakes the history of the organizaton from its founding in 1924 by Joseph M. Murphy, and espcifically answers these questions: (1) how has the structure of the organization evolved?, (2) why has the organization promoted the policies and activities it has?, (3) why has this organization proved to be enduring?, (4) what is the role of this organization in relation to other national scholastic journalism organizations? and (5) what is the current status of the organization?

The dissertation discusses briefly the development of student activities and school journalism and shows the academic, social, and civic values provided by participation in school journalism.

The researcher chronicled the history of the organization in four time periods: The Early Years, 1924-1939; The War Years, 1940-1952; The Golden Years, 1953-1969; and A Modern Association, 1970-1981. Each chapter details the activities and impact on the CSPA during a particular time span.

Principal sources for the development of this dissertation were (1) the literature review, (2) the review of the historical and correspondence files of the CSPA, and (3) the use of oral history techniques through interviews with the founder, former director, and acting director, and those people associated with the CSPA's long history.

The CSPA impact on schools has been felt world-wide. Through international exhibits, workshops, and presentations by the director, the CSPA has provided leadership in the school press field.

The dissertation explains the relationship between the CSPA and the Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association, which was formed in 1927, with the first president elected in 1928. It traces the mutual support the organizations have provided.

It explains Murphy's role in the founding of and direction of the CSPA for 45 years and how at times, his name and CSPA were synonymous. It documents recent administrative and procedural changes and innovations that have become necessary for the future growth of the organization.

Finally, the dissertation offers observations on the CSPA and suggestions for future research in the field of scholastic journalism.

ELIAS BOUDINOT, CHEROKEE EDITOR: THE FATHER OF AMERICAN INDIAN JOURNALISM Order No. DA8205400

LUEBKE, BARBARA FRANCINE, PH.D. *University of Missouri - Columbia*, 1981. 403pp. Supervisor: Dr. William H. Taft

In editing the first American Indian newspaper, the *Cherokee Phoenix*, for the first four and one-half years of its existence, Elias Boudinot can rightfully be called the father of Indian journalism. For all the words that have been written about the *Phoenix*, however, little attention has been paid to Boudinot as editor. One historian wrote in 1940 that the "paper maintained a journalistic standard whose catholic tone and editorial technique merit the respectful attention of present-day students of the press." The paper has gotten some of that attention; the man whose editorial leadership made the paper worth respecting has not. Boudinot does appear often in most books about the Cherokees and many books that examine indian-United States government relations. But in those, it is Boudinot the political participant more than Boudinot the journalist who emerges. Thus, this study of Boudinot as editor was undertaken. For the first time, the spotlight is on those years during which Boudinot primarily was involved in editing the *Phoenix*.

The story begins with Boudinot's birth early in the nineteenth century. Chapter II covers his early years in the Cherokee Nation, including his education and first extended contact with the whites. In Chapter III, Boudinot attends school in New England, marries a Connecticut white woman, and returns to the Cherokee Nation. Chapter IV examines the Cherokee Nation's progress of the early nineteenth century, its decision to publish a newspaper and young Boudinot's involvement in that venture. Chapter V covers the first year of the *Phoenix* and Boudinot's difficulties while editing in "a wilderness." In Chapter VI, the increasing politicization of Boudinot and the newspaper are examined. Chapter VII covers Boudinot's last year as editor, a year during which he became more and more frustrated with Cherokee difficulties and, ultimately, resigned his editorship in a "free press" dispute with the principal chief. Chapter VIII looks at the last years of Boudinot's life: his participation in the treaty that forced the Cherokees west, his own move west, and his assassination. Chapter IX assesses Boudinot's contributions to Indian journalism and his legacy as the first Indian editor. The author concludes that Boudinot often is remembered with scorn for the signature he appended to a treaty. He deserves to be remembered, too, not only as the first American Indian newspaper editor but also, and more important, as a journalist who, to the end, fought for what he believed in.

THE EFFECT OF ADVERTISING ON CONSUMER PRESS CREDIBILITY: AN EXPERIMENT Order No. 8201461

MANY, PAUL ANTHONY, PH.D. *Ohio University*, 1981. 247pp. Director of Dissertation: Dr. Hugh M. Culbertson

The main research question is: Does advertising by its mere presence or absence in the context of a newspaper, reporting consumer affairs, have any effect on the perceived credibility of that newspaper?

An experiment was conducted in which subjects (college students, $n = 480$) were presented with a specially-designed newspaper, modelled on *Consumer Reports*, containing consumer-oriented material believed to be of interest to students.

One set of subjects saw a newspaper with advertisements, another set saw a newspaper with no advertisements. Substituting for the advertisement were the same illustrations and similar wording in the same typefaces as had appeared in the advertisements.

Editorial content was also varied so that six subtypes were ultimately created: (1) Advertising and editorial copy favorable to products evaluated; (2) Advertising and editorial copy unfavorable to products evaluated; (3) Advertising and "neutral" copy--presenting evenhanded evaluations of products; (4) No advertising and copy favorable to products evaluated; (5) No advertising and copy unfavorable to products evaluated; and (6) No advertising and copy "neutral" to products evaluated.

Each subject was presented with only one version of the newspaper and filled out a questionnaire eliciting the following: A "credibility" rating for the newspaper read. "Credibility" was defined as a score on a modified version of a standardized attitude test for newspapers devised by Brinton, Bush and Newell (The Newspaper and Its Public, Stanford University, 1957).

Various personality and attitude measures such as Concept orientation, Machiavellianism attitude toward advertising, attitudes toward objectivity and utility of information presented, extent of media use, and demographic indicators such as sex, age, race, and income.

Findings are that those who had an unfavorable attitude toward advertising tended to believe a newspaper less when it carried advertising. In addition, considering only those who read newspapers with advertising, those who read an unfavorable product evaluation, and had high information utility tended to believe the newspaper less. Also among those who read a newspaper with advertising, those who saw a favorable product evaluation and think information source is important believed the newspaper less.

THE NEWSWRITING PROCESS: A PROTOCOL ANALYSIS CASE STUDY OF THREE PRACTICING JOURNALISTS Order No. 8201911

PITTS, BEVERLY JOYCE MILLER, ED.D. *Ball State University*, 1981. 427pp. Adviser: Dr. Lane Birkel

The general purpose of this study was to gather data to describe the newswriting process as conducted by three practicing journalists. Protocol analysis was employed as the primary research tool. Verbal protocols require subjects to "think out loud" as they compose; the writing sessions are tape recorded.

Three reporters who covered news daily were selected by their editors for the study. In the first protocol session the subjects wrote from sets of news facts. The second and third protocol sessions were conducted in the newsroom. All three reporters composed at least one story at the video display terminal. The protocol transcripts, interviews, notes from the stories, and the completed stories provided the data for analysis. A coding scheme was prepared which isolated and labeled activities of the newswriting process.

Findings indicated that the selection and writing of the lead was the most time-consuming task, that the writers wrote in a patterned sequence, that they concerned themselves with small units rather than the story as a whole, and that no overall goals or evaluations for the story were made. In addition, the writers showed evidence of recursiveness in their writing, and they had difficulty writing when the information for the story was not from their own newsgathering process.

A major conclusion was that the lead writing task was the most important act the writer performed because the selection of the lead determined the direction of the entire story; the lead selecting and writing had to take place before any other writing could be completed. The story was organized as it was written, not planned in advance. Editing was an integral part of the writing process, not a separate act of refining. Memory was the writer's most important tool for obtaining information during the writing process; notes provided cues for initiating a more detailed recall of the incident. The newsgathering and newswriting tasks were so closely related that they could not easily be separated. The writers planned and wrote one sentence at a time by orchestrating a complex set of activities all directed at the immediate task at hand.

PERCEIVED VALUE OF COLLEGE TRAINING BY PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS IN THREE METROPOLITAN AREAS

Order No. DA8206091

WULFEMEYER, KENNETH TIM, ED.D. *University of California, Los Angeles*, 1981. 109pp. Chair: Professor Lewis C. Solmon

The value of a college education is being questioned today at least as much as at any other time in recent history. The value and content of college training for journalists has long been a subject of great controversy. The purpose of this study was to survey professional journalists to determine their perceived values of college training, the desirable knowledge, skills and personal characteristics necessary to become a successful journalist and recommended general education college courses and journalism courses.

A 45-question survey instrument was sent to 275 professional journalists at the major newspapers, radio stations and television stations in Des Moines, Iowa, San Diego, California and Honolulu, Hawaii. In order to enrich the survey data, personal interviews were conducted with 15 journalists.

Findings were based on 150 responses (55% return rate). Almost 90% of the respondents had at least a B.A. degree and over 67% had majored in journalism while in college. About 85% of the respondents were at least somewhat satisfied with their lives and 78% were satisfied with their jobs. Newspaper journalists were more satisfied with their jobs than were broadcast journalists.

About 76% of the respondents reported their jobs often allowed them to use their skills and knowledge fully. If a professional thought he was using his skills and knowledge fully, he was more likely to be satisfied with his job than a professional who thought he was not using his skills and knowledge fully.

The respondents recommended prospective journalists learn about governmental structures, liberal arts and sciences, English grammar, people, history, economics, current events, community structures, journalistic practices, laws, business, mathematics, writing styles and physical sciences. The respondents reported that a journalist should know how to write, deal with people, conduct research, edit, type, speak well, take notes, listen effectively and operate journalistic equipment.

The respondents listed a number of necessary personal characteristics journalists should have or develop. These included curiosity, persistence, reliability, patience, flexibility, aggressiveness, intelligence, ambition, friendliness, skepticism, common sense, enthusiasm and confidence.

About 87% of the respondents reported general college training was at least somewhat valuable for a person preparing for a career in journalism. Print journalists thought college training was more valuable than did broadcast journalists. The respondents recommended courses in political science, economics, history, English grammar, sociology, literature, business and psychology.

About 75% of the respondents reported college training in journalism was valuable for someone preparing for a career in journalism. Broadcast journalists and professionals who majored in journalism thought such training was more valuable than did newspaper journalists and professionals who did not major in journalism.

Recommended journalism courses included reporting, writing, law of mass communication, editing, internships with professional media, photography, ethics and history. About 9% of the respondents recommended prospective journalists take no college journalism courses.

Respondents were adamant about the importance of "practical, hands-on," experiential training in college for prospective journalists. About 82% of the respondents felt such training was valuable. Broadcast journalists thought practical training was more valuable than did newspaper journalists. Respondents also stressed the importance of some form of on-the-job training.

Finally, the respondents reported that their college experience had been valuable for providing general knowledge, improving clear thinking, providing leadership skills, providing a useful first-job skill, helping them to find a good job, providing currently used skills and knowledge, providing a necessary degree, helping to set life goals, helping them to achieve higher salaries, improving their lives and for helping to shape currently held attitudes, beliefs and values.

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